



STATE OF IOWA

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REBUILD IOWA OFFICE (RIO) LEGISLATIVE WEEKLY

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RIO MISSION:

The Rebuild Iowa Office will lead the State of Iowa's efforts to rebuild safer, stronger and smarter in the wake of the 2008 severe storms and catastrophic flooding.

RIO VISION:

We envision a resilient Iowa that will be safe, sustainable and economically strong for its people, reaffirming its ties to the land, rivers, environment and rich cultural history.

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SECRETARY NAPOLITANO ANNOUNCES \$5.8 MILLION IN COMMUNITY DISASTER LOANS

Just three weeks after being sworn into office, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano arrived in eastern Iowa to announce \$5.8 million in Community Disaster Loans (CDL) for five cities affected by the floods and tornadoes of 2008, including the maximum \$5 million loan amount for Cedar Rapids.

The five Iowa cities approved for Community Disaster Loans are Cedar Rapids (\$5 million), New Hartford (\$118,811), Oakville (\$51,588), Palo (\$304,722) and Parkersburg (\$385,295).

"Community Disaster Loans provide much-needed funding to communities to help maintain essential services – like fire and police departments, school



Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano speaks in Cedar Rapids

boards and district court offices – in the aftermath of a disaster," said Secretary Napolitano. "With these disbursements, we are helping ensure the recovery process continues in these Iowa communities. FEMA will continue to collaborate with our state and local partners throughout the

area to speed the loan application process and get money into the hands of those that need it."

Loans can be made to local governments in need of financial assistance to perform essential services. CDL applicants may include

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HF 64 PROGRESS UPDATE

In the two weeks since the signing of HF 64, disaster-affected cities, counties, and individuals are seeing its impact.

Additional Jumpstart funds appropriated in HF 64 began flowing within seven days of the bill signing. As of Feb. 12, just over \$5 million had been approved or committed to applicants. With all agreements from the local entities currently

signed and submitted, more funds are expected to be committed shortly.

Eligible cities and counties have received applications for Community Disaster Grant funds. Some applications have already been submitted to the state for approval. Cities and counties still have until 04/01/09 to submit their applications to Iowa Homeland Security and

Emergency Management (HSEMD).

The Rebuild Iowa Office (RIO) and the Department of Human Services (DHS) are working with local Long-Term Recovery Committees to prepare those committees for the Individual Unmet Needs program and to ready them for the steps to take for effective fraud prevention as directed in HF 64.

REBUILD IOWA OFFICE POLICY UPDATE

As 2009's legislative session continues, the Rebuild Iowa Office's priority remains on developing comprehensive policy suggestions in partnerships with other state agencies and the general assembly.

Many suggestions of the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission (RIAC) have

already moved forward in the legislature, including the assistance for communities, non-profits, small businesses and individuals found in HF 64. More of the RIAC's disaster-related policies including floodplain management and flood insurance for Iowa's communities currently are

being discussed in the legislature.

As the session progresses, the Rebuild Iowa Office looks forward to continuing these close partnerships for further policy developments to make Iowa safer, stronger, and smarter in the wake of the 2008 summer disasters.



RIO RELEASES NEW BUDGET

The Rebuild Iowa Office (RIO) has released its projected budget for the life of the office, which runs through June 30, 2011. The budget includes a number of revisions, but specifically reduces projected benefits and overtime costs for employees. This revised budget trims about \$625,000 from the draft budget that was presented to legislators in early February. This new budget more accurately reflects the value of compensation planned for employees.

When the Disaster Recovery Bill (HF 64) was unanimously passed by both the House and

Senate, it formalized the Rebuild Iowa Office and set a sunset date of June 30, 2011. The Rebuild Iowa Office has a \$3 million grant from the Economic Development Administration which runs out in June 2010. State funds are necessary to keep the office staffed to continue the recovery effort for the final year as authorized by the legislature.

State funds are also needed in FY 2009 and FY 2010 due to activities required in HF 64 which cannot be paid for with federal funds. Activities such as reports to the legislature and staffing of the Coordinating Council,

as well as work toward some of the goals outlined (the public purchase of land and natural disaster forecasting) are simply not allowed under the Rebuild Iowa Office's agreements for the Economic Development Administration grant or Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. In addition, part of the Rebuild Iowa Office's future role would include seeking additional funding and appropriations from federal government and Congress. State funding is needed for these activities.



Napolitano (from page 1)

fire and police departments that provide critical community services during and in the immediate aftermath of disasters, as well as school boards, district

court offices and local governments.

Along with this announcement, Napolitano stressed that recovering Iowans will not be forgotten. The Feb. 11 visit to Cedar Rapids and Iowa City

allowed Secretary Napolitano to speak candidly with first responders and tour the Hancher/Voxman complex, one of the state's larger Public Assistance projects at the University of Iowa.

